

Farmworker program builds on lessons of past two years

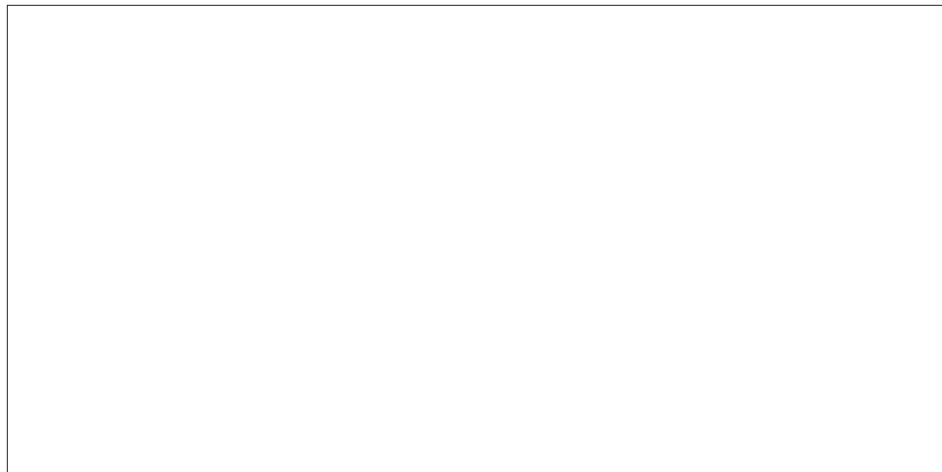
The Farmworker Education Special Project moved into its third phase this year. The first two years of the EPA grant-funded project sought to assess the educational needs of farmworkers, and how to best meet those needs. This year, some of those findings were put into action. One of the main projects was the development of an interactive, "hands-on" training workshop for pesticide handlers.

The Farmworker Education Advisory Committee, a group of 20 to 25 educators, growers, crop advisors, managers, and others, was instrumental in the planning and preparation of this successful training workshop which took place March 1-2 at Wenatchee Valley College.

Committee members developed the idea for the workshop based on a similar program put on by the University of California at Davis. The committee decided to focus on training Spanish-speaking pesticide 'handlers'- those who mix, load and spray pesticides but are not necessarily licensed – because they are the group most at risk for exposure to pesticides.

Committee members contributed to the success of this workshop by brainstorming on elements of a successful educational workshop, helping to locate trainers and coordinators, donating supplies and volunteering time to help with various tasks.

At the March event, students worked in four small groups of ten to twelve persons. Each were led by two bilingual, volunteer trainers. Participants had the opportunity to "learn by doing" and practice skills related to first aid, personal protective equipment, mixing and loading, and clean-up and disposal of pesticides.



The "hands - on" training provides a participatory, interactive environment.

Comments from students attending the workshop included, *"Very useful. I hope they continue with this method (of training)."* *"...with this type of training you learn to do a better job and more skillfully."* Trainers also found the workshops to be a valuable experience: *"I just want to say thanks for letting me participate in this event. It has been a great experience for me..."*

But what made this training so successful?

First, the "hands-on" learning style used in this training program provides a participatory, interactive environment that is more interesting and results in better understanding and retention than the traditional lecture method.

Second, the event sought to use the existing resources of the local agricultural community. Involving the community is one way to seek out talented local educators, including those who have the knowledge and expertise in their field, but lack experience training others. At the end of the March event, over ten participants expressed interest in becoming future trainers.

Last, the workshop was a community event supported by local businesses and growers. Generous

donations from Wilbur-Ellis, Northwest Wholesale, and Terra Distribution to name a few, and the time, energy and enthusiasm of our volunteer trainers and committee members, ensured the success of the workshop.

The training was co-sponsored by WSDA, Washington State Horticultural Association, Wenatchee Valley College and WSU Cooperative Extension. Coordinators and committee members hope to use this program as a pilot for a larger training event that may take place in Quincy early next year. They also hope that other communities interested in providing quality training to their Hispanic pesticide handlers will use these programs as a model.

AmeriCorps volunteers worked closely with the Farmworker Education Special Project this year to provide Worker Protection Standard training for workers. More than 2,000 farmworkers, grade school children and others were trained in basic pesticide safety procedures.

Two new AmeriCorps volunteer positions are again being partially supported by WSDA this year. Their combined goals include training at least 1,800 farmworkers by December. In addition, AmeriCorps

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Lessons

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volunteers assisted with preparation of the Hands-On Pesticide Handler Workshop, and the promotion of an English as a Second Language (ESL) for Farm Safety curriculum. The curriculum was introduced to ESL teachers at the Wenatchee Valley College, and is now being used as part of classroom exercises in Chelan and Okanogan counties.

Your assistance encouraged

Developing Spanish language recertification courses is another goal of the Farmworker Education Special project. We are continuing to work with local entities to encourage people who are interested in giving recertification courses in Spanish in the future. If you or anyone you know is interested, please contact Farmworker Education Special Project personnel listed below.

Now that the Spanish Private Applicator Study Manual is available (see "Study manual ..." on page 17), pre-license orientation classes are becoming a regular part of the preparation offered for Spanish-speaking individuals seeking a Private Applicator's license. Pre-license orientations are held about two weeks before the regular pre-license classes given by Jorge Lobos.

The orientation emphasizes the need to obtain and study the Spanish Private Applicator manual prior to the course and provides the participants with an overview of the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful in the course and on the exam. Students can take a pre-test to assess their current knowledge and abilities, and are provided with information on classes to assist them in areas in which they need improvement.

For more information, contact Lisa Drittenbas at (509) 665-3395 or Tim Stock at (509) 662-0590.

Three new pesticide exams developed

Three new exams – the Weed Series, Seed Treatment and Private Applicator – were developed this year to ensure that the examinations accurately reflect these specialized areas of pest control.

WSDA and WSU pesticide education staff worked with growers and various industry representatives to develop exams that more directly reflect the knowledge necessary to competently perform in these areas.

To obtain a pesticide license, individuals must pass all applicable exams, complete a license application and pay the appropriate fee. In addition to the Weed Series and Seed Treatment exams, applicants must pass a Laws and Safety exam. The Private Applicator exam contains the laws and safety subject matter.

Weed Series Exam

The Weed Series exam booklet is broken into four sections:

1. A core weed exam contains questions on basic weed science and general herbicide use principles.
2. Turf and Ornamental Weed Control tests the applicant's knowledge of weed control in residential, public or industrial lawns and ornamental beds.
3. Rights-of-Way Weed Control tests the applicant's competency to manage vegetation, including noxious weeds, along roadsides and similar locations.
4. Agricultural Weed Control tests the applicant's ability to manage weed species in an agricultural setting.

The applicant takes the core weed section and only those specialty exams needed to perform their particular type of weed control. Individuals commercially applying herbicides, public employees applying general

use herbicides through power equipment, and those using restricted or experimental use herbicides need to take part or all of this exam.

Seed Treatment Exam

The Seed Treatment exam, last revised in 1977, is for individuals who wish to treat vegetative-seed materials for pests such as fungi, bacteria and insects. It includes questions on the kinds of seeds treated, pests controlled by various seed treatments and how to correctly and safely apply seed-treatment pesticides.

Individuals commercially applying seed-treatment pesticides and those using restricted or experimental use, seed-treatment pesticides, must acquire this category.

Private Applicator Exam

For the first time since 1991, the Private Applicator exam has been revised. Both English and Spanish language versions are available. The Spanish language version provides questions in Spanish while the exam labels are in English.

Individuals who use or supervise the use of restricted use pesticides on their own or their employer's agricultural land must take this exam. If the applicator applies a pesticide to water that moves off the agricultural land in question, the aquatic category is also necessary.

To get a study manual for each exam, including the Spanish Private Applicator exam, call the WSU Bulletin Office at 1-800-723-1763. Some manuals may be available from your county cooperative extension office.

All WSDA offices have study manual order forms available. Contact Pesticide Licensing at (360) 902-2020 or by e-mail at license@agr.wa.gov to obtain a copy of the order form or to inquire about the WSDA testing process.